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'Bugs' Snag U.S. Cases At Chicago

The Justice Department admitted yesterday that criminal action against a group of demonstrators at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago last summer has been stalled by Government wiretapping.

Indictments had been considered imminent against both demonstration leaders and some policemen for the Chicago disturbances. But that was before the Supreme Court ruled on Monday that victims of illegal electronic eavesdropping are entitled to inspect bugging records to see if the prosecutions case against them is tainted.

'May Cause Problem'

A Justice Department spokesman said the Chicago case was "under consideration" because it contained "some wiretapping which may cause a problem in the possi-

ble prosecution on militants." Previously, the Department had indicated that the grand jury action against militants and policemen would occur at the same time.

"It is possible that a national security problem is involved" in the eavesdropping, the spokesman added. He declined to elaborate.

Government lawyers, meanwhile, were preparing to ask the Supreme Court next week to reconsider its ruling, apparently on grounds that it would compromise national security information.

Govt. Move Fails

On Monday, the Court rejected the Government's request to have records of illegal eavesdropping, especially when the eavesdropping was done in espionage and other national security cases, turned over to a trial judge, who would decide what portions were "relevant" to a defense claim that the prosecution built its case by illegal means.

Justice Department lawyers say that giving this material directly to the defense would frequently require the embarrassing disclosure that certain embassies have been bugged and might in many other cases smoke out other intelligence secrets.

In December, the Government disclosed in a Virginia court case that Jerry Rubin, one of the most conspicuous of the Chicago militants, had been "overheard as the result of electrical surveillances directed against others in the interests of national security."